



ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SHELLFISHERIES



MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2018

DNREC Auditorium, 89 Kings Hwy, Dover, DE 19901
Div. of Fish & Wildlife phone: 302-739-9914

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Leonard "Limbo" Voss, Jr., Chairman
Patrick Gaffney (*Absent*)
Virgilio Pacelli (*Absent*)
Paul Satterfield
Steven Copp (*Absent*)
Richard S. Hand, Jr. (*Absent*)
Robert Thompson (*Absent*)

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

John Clark
Stew Michels
David Saveikis, Director
Rich Wong
Chief Drew Aydelotte

PUBLIC

15 Visitors

Agenda Item 1. Approval of Minutes from 01/10/18 and 01/25/17

Chairman Voss called the meeting to order at 7:05PM and thanked everyone for their attendance. A quorum was not present and therefore the minutes were not approved.

Agenda Item 2. Discuss the possible restructuring of the Shellfish Advisory Council, including the number and qualifications of Councilors

Ms. Lydia Massey, Director of Boards and Commissions, discussed restructuring the Council to increase Councilor attendance and participation, given that this was the third consecutive Council meeting without a quorum. Ideas for restructuring included reducing the Council from seven to five members and eliminating the current requirements that Councilors represent a balance of political party affiliation and specific commercial or recreational shellfisheries. Ms. Massey sought input from the Council on whether the Council needed restructuring or just new Councilors. Ms. Massey and the Council agreed to seek new Councilors and further discuss restructuring at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 3. Update on Delaware conch research

Mr. Rich Wong, Fisheries Biometrician, gave a presentation on historical conch (knobbed whelk) harvest and his recent research on conch biology. Delaware conch harvest went from 30,000 pounds in 2000 to over 2 million pounds in 2001, repeating a trend often seen in conch fisheries of a rapid boom in harvests, which is often then followed by a rapid decline. Mr. Wong explained that limited information on conch life history in Delaware Bay made management of the fishery difficult. He described his efforts to age conch by using the conch's statoliths. Statoliths help the conch maintain balance and they are useful for estimating a conch's age as statoliths acquire annual growth rings similar to a tree. Mr. Wong said aged statoliths revealed that it takes about five years for conch to reach Delaware's five inch minimum size limit, but it takes six years for most female conch to mature and spawn. He is also beginning to study conch movements and diet in Delaware Bay.

Agenda Item 4. Update on Inland Bays aquaculture

Mr. Stew Michels, Fisheries Program Manager, stated that, of the 343 Shellfish Aquaculture Development Area (SADA) acres available for lease, 105 acres are pending lease issuance, with 5 of those acres in Indian River Bay SADA, 95 acres in

Rehoboth Bay SADA and 5 acres in Little Assawoman Bay. Twenty-one acres are under active lease in Rehoboth and Little Assawoman Bay SADAs. A shellfish nursery has been permitted and is operating on Indian River at Hickory Cove. One lessee harvested oysters from a Rehoboth Bay aquaculture lease in October.

Agenda Item 5. Topics & Tentative date for the next meeting

Chairman Voss stated that the next meeting will be scheduled for January 2019 and suggested the following agenda item:

1. Further discuss the possible restructuring of the Shellfish Advisory Council, including the number and qualifications of Councilors

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Hoover

Rebecca Hoover
Recording Secretary

